RUSSIA PLANS MASSIVE MILITARY BOOST, P 10

Celebrity Buzz

Sandler in touch with his inner princess
pg 26

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Soccer Centre roof collapsed by snow, ice

COLLAPSE Perry Logan was just happy it didn't happen 12 hours later.

A catastrophic roof failure at the Calgary Soccer Centre yesterday afternoon was blamed on an accumulation of snow and ice by engineers. The cave-in ripped the roof's membrane and left twisted metal in its wake.

"It was an amazing amount of force and we're very fortunate that this didn't happen when there were thousands of kids in there," said Logan, the Centre's general manager.

A pickup game of soccer was scheduled to be held in the centre around noon today.

Repairs will have to wait until the weather returns to more temperate conditions, said Logan, whose daughter left the building at 1:30 a.m. after a cleaning shift, just two hours before the collapse.

METRO CALGARY

Hanukkah **Celebrating the miracle of oil**

CANDACE WARD / FOR METRO CANADA

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, home in Calgary for the holidays, lights the menorah at city hall yesterday in celebration of Hanukkah. Hanukkah, the eight-day Jewish festival of lights, began Sunday night.

Airport standstill

Carollers, food lighten mood for stranded passengers

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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Christmas carollers and free food helped ease the wait, but all the Calgary International Airport passengers really want for Christmas is to go home.

Long lineups and lengthy waits again greeted passengers at the airport yesterday, with many flight delays and cancellations due to severe weather across the country. WestJet provided customers with carollers and treats to lighten the mood.

"It's actually a really good idea, and it's nice while waiting in line to see," passenger Jacqueline Smith said.

And for some passengers, the singing voices were a godsend.

"She really loves music," father Brent Parker said of his 19-month-old daughter while they watched the group of 12 sing.

KRISTA SYLVESTER / METRO VALGARY

Nineteen-month-old Bronwyn Parker waited patiently atop a baggage carrier at Calgary International Airport yesterday. She and her parents have been waiting since Sunday for a flight.

The Parker family — Brent, Jolanta Scott-Parker and daughter Bronwyn — have been stranded in Calgary since Sunday night, when they left Ottawa for Victoria.

"We've been here awhile, not quite as long as others, but we have to wait until (tonight) to fly out, hopefully if all goes well," Parker said.

"I hope it's sooner than that, though. Our family has been waiting and rooting for us."

Amazingly, the couple's young daughter has been coping with the long wait the best, but it hasn't been easy, Scott-Parker said.

"She has a lot of food allergies, so it's been challenging to be able to feed her what she needs to eat while waiting at the airport," the mom added.

The couple had to rent a hotel in Calgary for Sunday and last night.

WestJet's Robert Palmer said the carollers, free food, coffee and treats were meant to help ease the stress for customers like the Parker family waiting in long lineups.

"People appreciate it, and we're just trying to let people know we know they want to get home, and we're going to get them home for Christmas," he said.

City-based airplane crashes in Colorado

NEIL MACKINNON
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Avalanche concerns forced police in Colorado's Costilla County to call off their recovery efforts after a Calgary-based Beechcraft 58P Baron airplane crashed Saturday night, killing both the man and woman inside, according to U.S. officials.

The plane, registered to Calgary firm MaurOil International, stopped for fuel at Pueblo Airport on Saturday night and then dropped off the radar around 7:50 p.m., said the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's Allen Kenitzer.

Two Black Hawk helicopters based out of Kirtland Air Force base near Albuquerque, N.M., spotted the wreckage on a southern Colorado mountainside, said Sgt. James Chavez.

While search and rescue teams got within a mile of the crash site, deteriorating weather and increasing risks of triggering an avalanche put the search on hold yesterday.

"We're 99 per cent sure we know who we're dealing with here; we just need to contact the next of kin to make it official," said Chavez, adding they still need to recover the victims.

MaurOil founder and president Gerrit Maureau was married to Sheila Malm, a Calgary family physician, and his company's website lists "flying" as one of his hobbies.

The site also said Maureau "owns a Beechcraft 58P Baron."

When contacted by Metro, the Malm family asked for their privacy to be respected.

Seasonal Depression

Economic woes impact holidays
Second in a two-part series, pg 7

Local pg 4

Free hugs for holidays

York Report pg 19

Canadian GM among NFL's greatest execs

Health pg 20

Happiness still not for sale

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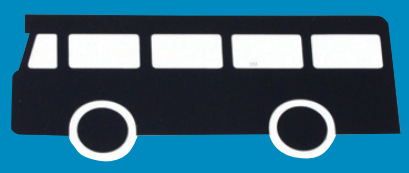
Fallin' snowflakes break record
Calgary's snowbanks are the biggest they've ever been, or at least since Environment Canada started keeping track in 1955. A total of 29 centimetres of snow have been dumped on Calgary so far, eclipsing the old record of 19 cm by Dec. 21, 1995. METRO CALGARY

Local



Free transit Christmas, New Year's Eve

Calgary Transit is giving a Christmas gift to Calgarians in the form of free transit Christmas Day. Services will run from 7 a.m. until midnight on Christmas Day and C-trains will run every 30 minutes. Calgary Transit will also provide free service on New Year's Eve from 6 p.m. until the end of service. METRO CALGARY

Outdoor work on ice until thaw

NEIL MACKINNON
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PROJECTS David Acres couldn't tell the difference between a screw and a nail.

At least not in this frigid weather, which has brought a halt to all outdoors projects over the past three weeks, leaving hundreds of roofers, carpenters and window and door specialists with work that they can't touch.

"It's a hell of a mess and I feel for the workers." David Acres

"It's not like there isn't a whole pile of it out there, that's the frustrating part," said the Acres Roofing and Contracting owner and operator who can't remember anything like it in 20 years of business.

"It's a hell of a mess, and I feel for the workers. A lot of them are living paycheque to paycheque and this has really put the pinch on."

SIS Supply Install Services' Megan Hospes said the only thing keeping the pile of window and door work from becoming absolutely unmanageable has been a slowing economy.

"But when it warms up, we'll still be going nonstop just to catch up," she said.

Flames shine bright at ACH

CANDICE WARD
for Metro Calgary

It may not have been Santa, and it may not have been a big red suit, but the red jerseys had nearly the same effect at the Alberta Children's Hospital yesterday.

Four members of the Calgary Flames made their annual visit to distribute toys and spread some Christmas cheer to some 300 kids.

"Hockey is a game where we have ups and downs, but this is life and this is really what it's all about," said Craig Conroy, centre for the Calgary Flames.

Conroy along with Dion Phaneuf, Robyn Regehr and Cory Sarich joined a group of patients in showing off their green thumbs with a few horticultural-therapy activities.

Conroy has been taking part in children's hospital visits since he began his NHL career and looks forward to them each year.

"Being able to come in and cheer them up puts everything into perspective for us," said Conroy.

The children also showed a lot of excitement about the event.

"When I heard they were coming, I have been excited for weeks," said Ashley Ball, 12, a patient at the ACH.

Meeting her all-time favourite player, Dion Phaneuf, will be one of the highlights for Ball this Christmas.

"He is just such an awesome player," said Ball.

CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO CALGARY

Dion Phaneuf of the Calgary Flames takes time out from the ice yesterday to spread some Christmas cheer to Mackenzie Jensen, 6, right, and Tyler Jensen, 3, at the Alberta Children's Hospital.

Holidays hugs embrace Christmas spirit

LINDSEY WALLIS
for Metro Calgary

It was a frigid minus-20 something at the corner of 8th Avenue and 1st Street where Sheryl Hinds, Wanda Walle and Gerald Stern stood Saturday afternoon, bundled in parkas, scarves and mittens, with bright red T-shirts declaring "FREE HUGS."

Their church, the Joy of Life Centre, organizes these free-hug days throughout the year at different places in the city. On Saturday they were offering free hugs and candy canes to passers-by to lift people's spirits and spread the joy of the season.

"It's nice; I feel that everyone needs a hug," said Wanda Walle. "We want to bring joy back into people's life."

Sheryl Hinds enjoys giving out hugs because, "it reminds us that giving is not just Christmas presents, it's also about giving love."

The trio said that generally people were very appreciative of the warm gesture. Colin Matthews, who works in the outdoor clothing store across the street, said that it added to the holiday spirit.

"I think it's nice that they are out there, braving the cold to do that."

Woman assaulted while walking dog

INVESTIGATION A woman walking her dog along 22 Ave. and 4 St. NE Saturday night was assaulted by a man.

The victim was walking between 10:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. when a man grabbed her from behind in a "bear-hug" motion, and when she struggled he fled the scene.

The suspect is tall, with a large build. He was wearing a fabric coat and smelled of alcohol. METRO CALGARY

News in brief

FEE CAP The provincial government is capping the fees municipalities can charge to launch a complaint about their property-tax assessments beginning in the New Year. The maximum charge for filing an appeal for single-family homes will be $50, while multi-family and commercial building will be $650, the government said yesterday. METRO CALGARY

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What's online today.

Video Food bank donations survive the economic downturn at **metronews.ca/local**

Video West Coast's wicked winter weather wreaks havoc at airport at **metronews.ca/local**

Comment Allan Small on whether it's time to invest in gold at **metronews.ca/investing**

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Raising more funds for United Way

As a response to the United Way of Calgary's final push, Shell Canada employees added $45,000 to the corporation's $3.4-million gift. More than 750 employees participated in activities across the city to raise the extra funds and are encouraging other businesses to ante up. **METRO CALGARY**

Cops still seeking leads on beheading

MURDER It has been nearly 10 months, and police are still no closer to determining who beheaded Pargat Singh Kahlon, 70, and dumped his body into a Chestermere ditch.

Pargat Singh Kahlon

"We've followed up on so many leads, but the broader picture is still very cloudy," said RCMP Sgt. Patrick Webb. "Someone out there has information. We're not going to let this thing go cold, and we need more information."

RCMP ask anyone with information to call major crimes at 403-699-2640.

METRO CALGARY

Record Canadian rock?

CANDICE WARD
for Metro Calgary

The fireball that illuminated much of the sky over northern Alberta and Saskatchewan in late November is expected to make Canadian history as the largest record meteorite fall.

The recovery of the shattered remains of a meteorite that lay strewn across a field southeast of Lloydminster, is now the focus for U of C planetary scientist Alan Hildebrand.

"The last day the search teams were out, it snowed all day and we still found five meteorites, which is ridiculous," Hildebrand said. "That just shows how many are out there."

Hildebrand and his research team recovered more than 100 pieces of the meteorite and expect to find many more when the search resumes in the spring.

"We will try to organize the biggest meteorite search effort that Canada has ever seen," said Hildebrand.

It has been estimated about one tonne of space material fell from the sky and Hildebrand expects close to 10,000 fragments hit the earth.

With the help of researchers worldwide, Hildebrand hopes the recovered fragments of meteorite will provide some insight into its origins.

CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO CALGARY

Dr. Alan Hildebrand from the U of C shows off one of the hundreds of meteorite pieces that showered northern Alberta and Saskatchewan in November.

More going without at Christmas

ECONOMY In these times of economic uncertainty, there are more families going without a Christmas, according to a Calgary aid agency.

"What's happening is there are a lot of people losing jobs or living on a fixed income, and they have to prioritize," Sigrid Mahr of the Salvation Army said. "Christmas dinners and Christmas gifts have to be a low priority for them."

Mahr said at the beginning of the month there was a 10 per cent increase in families seeking help over last year, but estimates by Christmas that number will be 15 per cent.

Karen Mandel said she and her family are going without Christmas gifts this year, but are still celebrating the holidays.

"We can't afford the gifts and huge dinner, but it's really about spending time together, and that's something that doesn't cost us anything," she said.

KRISTA SYLVESTER/ METRO CALGARY

With every New Year's comes resolutions

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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Call it pre-Christmas guilt or after-New Year's shame, but the resolutions are already piling up at fitness gyms and wellness centres across the province.

"January and February is definitely our busiest time of the year for those New Year's resolutions," laser technician Ken Wallace said.

Wallace runs Imagine Laserworks in Calgary and says people are always making New Year's resolutions to lose weight and quit smoking.

"But making New Year's resolutions isn't really a good idea because most people have trouble keeping them by putting too much pressure on themselves," he said. "People should just do it to do it."

And while January is a busy time for Infinite Fitness in Edmonton, personal trainer Tristan Zapata said those serious about their workout are working hard, pre-Christmas.

"They know there is a lot of social things, eating and drinking going on over the holidays so they work extra hard. We don't discourage those things, but just want them to be smart about enjoying it," he said.

Public Notice

Residential garbage collection
Temporary holiday schedule changes

Dec. 23, 2008 – Jan. 2, 2009

Waste & Recycling Services wishes all Calgarians a happy and safe holiday season. As we wind down another year of operations, there are a few temporary residential garbage collection schedule changes in effect during the holiday season.

If you receive garbage collection service on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, the following temporary changes will be in effect during the holiday season only. Collection of your garbage will happen one day earlier than normal until the end of 2008. We'll resume garbage collection on your regular collection day during the first week of January.

If you receive garbage collection service on Friday, there's no change to your collection schedule. You'll continue to receive service on Fridays during the holiday season.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21	22 **Tuesday** collection happens today	23 **Wednesday** collection happens today	24 **Thursday** collection happens today	25 **(Christmas Day –** No garbage collection)	26 **No change –** Regular Friday collection day	27
28	29 **Tuesday** collection happens today	30 **Wednesday** collection happens today	31 **Thursday** collection happens today	1 **(New Year's Day –** No garbage collection)	2 **No change –** Regular Friday collection day	3

Commercial garbage collection - There are no changes to commercial garbage collection schedules during the holiday season.

Recycling depot operations - There are no changes to recycling depot operations during the holiday season.

City of Calgary landfills - City of Calgary landfills will be closed on Dec. 25, 2008 and Jan. 1, 2009.

2008-2624

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THE CITY OF CALGARY

Season's Greetings

We look forward to seeing our continuing students and their families in the New Year and offer a warm welcome to those of you who will be joining us in January.

We wish you all the best for 2009.

Calgary Board of Education

January 5
Classes resume

January 12
Registration for Kindergarten begins

Calgary Board of Education

Educating Tomorrow's Citizens Today

Canadian woman missing in China
There's growing concern for the safety of a Toronto woman missing in China. The woman's relatives in Windsor, Ont., say they have had no contact with her in almost six weeks. CBC NEWS ONLINE

7

Canada

Financial worries compound stress

Holidays and woeful economy a bad mix

KRISTEN THOMPSON
Metro Canada

With many Canadian workers dealing with lay-offs or the worry of being let go in the New Year, the 2008 holiday season is turning out to be particularly stressful, which can lead to depression.

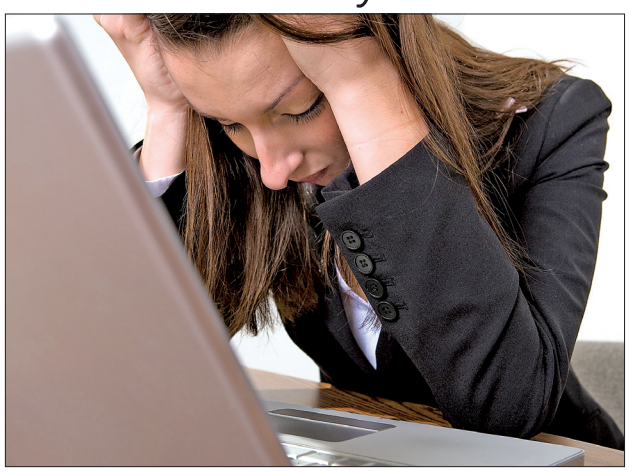
Kat Ivancic, 20, a customer service representative at a national bank in Vancouver, said everyone in her office is worried about losing their jobs in 2009, given the state of the economy.

She said while no one has been let go yet, the company is encouraging voluntary early retirement.

"I've seen some of my older co-workers cry over it," Ivancic said yesterday.

"(And customers) are coming in stressed out with financial crises, so customer service has got a lot harder … I don't want to deal with (this) stuff, especially at Christmas."

Besides concerns over job stability, Canadians are also dealing with added workloads, low morale because of the cancellation of



As the world economy tanks, the 2008 holiday season has Canadian workers stressed about job security, which can greatly affect people who are susceptible to depression.

METRO FEATURE
Seasonal Depression

Christmas parties and bonuses, and the stress of having to tell family they've been let go. To people who are susceptible to depression, these can all worsen their condition.

"Things that are out of our control affect our mental health," said Dr. Joti Samra, a registered clinical psychologist at Simon Fraser University.

"(The holidays) are one of the worst times of the year to be worried about finances."

Samra said the best way to cope with the financial stress is to be adaptable and keep your family in the loop.

"Take a good hard look at spending (as a family)," she said. "Identify what things are in your control and what things are not. It's still a family issue, and one person alone doesn't need to bear that responsibility."

Crisis centre seeing a sharp rise in callers

CHELSEA MIYA
for Metro Canada

The crisis help line at the Distress Centres of Toronto, one of the busiest in the country at roughly 120,000 callers a year, has seen a 22 per cent increase in calls about financial difficulties.

It's not bad weather blues but times of transition that hit people the hardest, said Karen Letofsky, the executive director.

And what worse time of transition than a recession?

"We've seen more and more people calling about suicide," said Letofsky. "Depression, heightened anxiety, fear of failure, fear of the future, wishing they could escape everything that's happening around them."

Letofsky said the worst fallout is yet to come, as the realities of lost jobs and homes sinks in.

Within the next few months the intensity and frequency of calls related to the economy are expected to increase, she added.

Where to go for help

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention www.casp-acps.ca
- Crisis Hotlines:
- Calgary — Distress Centre Calgary (403) 266-1605, 24-hour
- Nationwide — Covenant House 1-800-999-9999, 24-hour

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Woman found alive after being buried in snow for 3 days
A missing Ontario woman was found alive yesterday, after spending three days buried under deep snow in an isolated field in Hamilton. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Harper adds a blue touch to red house

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, whose minority Conservative government could be brought down soon, angered opposition parties yesterday by naming 18 people to Parliament's unelected Senate chamber.

"These 18 patronage appointments show that when it comes to job creation, Mr. Harper cares more about rewarding his Conservative friends than creating jobs for Canadians."
NDP MP David Christopherson

Harper had promised not to make any more appointments to the Senate, which he wants to turn into an elected body. The Senate, the less powerful upper house of Parliament, is now dominated by the opposition Liberals, whom Harper accuses of blocking, or watering down, government legislation.

Government officials had telegraphed Harper's appointments, arguing that if the government were brought down in the House of Commons over a budget set to be delivered on Jan. 27, his rivals would then be able to stuff the 105-seat Senate with their own candidates.

Last month the Liberals signed a coalition deal with the New Democrats to bring down Harper on the grounds he was mismanaging the economy. Harper escaped a confidence vote by having Parliament suspended.

"Our government will continue to push for a more democratic, accountable and effective Senate. If Senate vacancies are to be filled, however, they should be filled by the government that Canadians elected rather than by a coalition that no one voted for," Harper said in a statement.

David Christopherson, an MP for the New Democrats, accused Harper of breaking his word on making Senate appointments and said the move would cost $8 million at a time when the economy was suffering.

"Mr. Harper should be focused on the 71,000 Canadians who lost their jobs last month," he said in a statement.

"These 18 patronage appointments show that when it comes to job creation, Mr. Harper cares more about rewarding his Conservative friends than creating jobs for Canadians."

A senior Harper aide told reporters that the prime minister would also move to fill 11 more vacancies in the Senate when they open up over the next year.

"There were so many vacancies in the Senate that it wasn't able to function," said Steven Fletcher, the junior government minister in charge of democratic reform.

"We had an unelected body blocking legislation from an elected body — the House of Commons — and it wasn't a sustainable situation," he told CBC.

The Conservatives won a strengthened minority in an Oct. 14 election and he called on his rivals to work together to tackle the global financial crisis.

The spirit of co-operation only lasted until late November, when Harper moved to cut public financing for political parties, a step that would have hit opposition parties particularly hard.

REUTERS

Senate record

- The CBC said it was the largest number of senatorial appointments made in a single day in Canadian history.

Husband gets life sentence for 'horrific' attack

MURDER Naked and bleeding from head wounds, Zofia Strojnik desperately tried to escape her hammer-swinging husband.

But she was too weak, and in too much pain. She made it out of their Mississauga, Ont., townhouse, but was quickly dragged back inside, her hand leaving a bloody print on a patio railing.

Yesterday, Julian Strojnik, 57, was given a sentence of life in prison for inflicting a painful death on his wife of 31 years.

The former bricklayer pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in what Justice Bruce Durno described as a "horrific and prolonged" attack.

Under an agreement between Crown prosecutors and defence lawyers, Strojnik will not be eligible for parole for at least 10 years.

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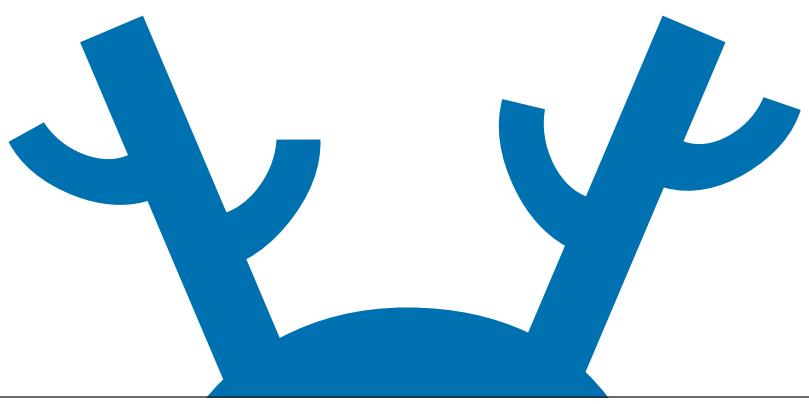

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Anonymous bomb threat forces plane turnaround in Athens

An Aeroflot flight from Athens to Moscow turned back in midair yesterday after receiving an anonymous bomb threat, but no explosives were found after police searched the plane. The Airbus A-319 carrying 49 passengers had been flying for around an hour when officials ordered it to turn back. REUTERS

World

Green Christmases more common

The odds of a white Christmas in temperate parts of the northern hemisphere have diminished in the last century and will likely decline further by 2100, experts said. Even though heavy snow this year will guarantee a white Christmas in many parts of Asia, Europe and North America, a 0.7 C rise in world temperatures since 1900 and projected bigger rises by 2100 suggest an inexorable trend. REUTERS

Russia plans military boost

Russia plans a massive increase in its weapons procurement for three years beginning in 2009, with 300 tanks, 14 warships and almost 50 airplanes on the shopping list, a senior government official said yesterday.

Vladislav Putilin, deputy head of the military-industrial commission, told journalists after a cabinet meeting the government planned to allocate 4 trillion roubles ($141.5 billion US) in 2009-11 to modernise its army.

The move comes after Russia's five-day war with neighbouring Georgia. Russia won, but the combat exposed a Soviet-style army with obsolete equipment, poorly coordinated command, outdated communications and a lack of spy drones and high-precision bombs.

Putilin said that over the three-year period Russia's armed forces would receive more than 400 new types of weapons, including 48 aircraft, six spy drones, 60 helicopters, 14 warships, 300 tanks and more than 2,000 auto vehicles. REUTERS

Longer terms OK'd

- Russian parliament unanimously approved extending presidential terms yesterday, an amendment which has fuelled speculation that Vladimir Putin will return as head of state.

Spain **Winning the big one**

REUTERS/ALBERT GEA

Monica Torras, an employee of a ticket office that sold part of the winning number of El Gordo ("the big one"), one of the world's richest lotteries, sprays champagne at a lottery office in Barcelona yesterday. The prize of 2.3 billion euros ($3.2 billion US) is split into thousands of prizes.

Obama's green team set to bloom

ENERGY U.S. president-elect Barack Obama's new "green dream team" is committed to battling climate change and ready to push for big policy reforms, environmental advocates said yesterday.

Among Obama's picks are Nobel physics laureate Stephen Chu, who will head the Energy Department, and former environmental lawyer and U.S. Senator Ken Salazar as Interior secretary.

Obama has pledged to create 5 million green jobs and invest $150 billion US in renewable energy over the next decade. REUTERS

News in brief

ANIMALS A pig that survived 36 days buried in the rubble of May's massive Sichuan earthquake, living off charcoal and rainwater, has been voted China's favourite animal in a recent poll, but the attention has made him fat and bad-tempered, state media said.

NEW JERSEY Five men were convicted yesterday of conspiracy to kill U.S. soldiers in a planned attack on an army base in New Jersey that prosecutors described as a bid to wage Islamist holy war against America. The U.S. attorney said he would seek life sentences for the five foreign-born defendants. REUTERS

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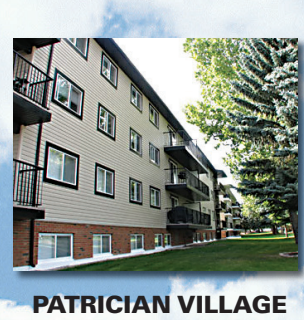
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U.S. OKs China-steel duties despite WTO challenge

A U.S. trade panel gave final approval yesterday to import duties on circular welded steel pipe from China in a case already being challenged by Beijing at the World Trade Organization. **REUTERS**

Study may predict if drugs will work

HEALTH Doctors hope to be able to better predict which patients will respond to traditional treatment for the hepatitis C virus using a new method for identifying slight variances in the virus' genetic makeup.

U.S. researchers said yesterday that the technique may prove useful for other viruses such as HIV, as well. The finding could be used to develop a test that would analyze a patient's specific virus strain before treatment was started.

REUTERS

Uribe rejects aid for hostage talks

COLOMBIA Colombian President Alvaro Uribe yesterday rejected involvement of any foreign government in negotiating the release of FARC guerrilla hostages after the rebels offered to free six captives from their jungle camps.

The FARC says it plans soon to hand two kidnapped politicians and four members of the armed forces to a Colombian senator. **REUTERS**

Paris letter slamming Kennedy a fake: Paper

The New York Times has identified as fake a letter it published yesterday that denounced Caroline Kennedy's bid to become a U.S. senator and was attributed to the mayor of Paris.

GARY HERSHORN/REUTERS

Caroline Kennedy is the daughter of slain former U.S. president John F. Kennedy.

Kennedy, the daughter of slain former U.S. president John F. Kennedy, has been touring New York state in recent days to drum up support for her bid for the U.S. Senate seat of Hillary Clinton, who has been nominated secretary of state.

The letter, allegedly signed by Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoe, said Kennedy's bid to fill Clinton's Senate seat was "surprising and not very democratic, to say the least."

"We French have been consistently admiring of the American Constitution, but it seems that recently both Republicans and Democrats are drifting away from a truly democratic model," the letter said, describing Kennedy's bid as "in very poor taste."

The Times has expressed its regrets to Delanoe and the paper said it was reviewing its procedures to verify letters.

REUTERS

More U.S. investors sue over Madoff case

COURT Investors have sued Fairfield Greenwich Group hedge fund and Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., the latest firms to face lawsuits for entrusting money to investment manager Bernard Madoff, accused of orchestrating a $50-billion US fraud.

Fairfield, which had $7.5 billion invested with Madoff, was sued in New York State Supreme Court on Friday by two investors.

In a separate lawsuit yesterday, two investors sued in U.S. District Court in New York to recover losses from Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co.

In seclusion

- Bernard Madoff is under house arrest in his Manhattan apartment and he has not formally responded in court to the charge in the criminal complaint.

Madoff, 70, was arrested and charged on Dec. 11 with securities fraud. He is quoted in court documents describing the investment arm of his firm as "basically a giant Ponzi scheme," one in which early investors are paid with the money of new clients.

REUTERS

Parents' anger remains after quake

CHINA Seven months after a vast earthquake rocked southwest China, grieving parents who have been harassed, silenced and sometimes arrested are keeping vigil over memories and questions the government would rather leave untouched.

The May 12 quake killed more than 80,000 people, turning schools to rubble.

The Chinese government has since embarked on a frenzied reconstruction drive, and parents say there is less room than ever for their suggestion that incompetence or corruption led to the building of shoddy schools that crumbled all to easily.

REUTERS

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Comment & Views

Comment

'08 as ugly as they come

NationalReport

As years go, they don't get much uglier than 2008. The economy started on a long and likely brutal plunge. The never-ending war in Afghanistan showed no signs of closure. We had yet another election which was dispiriting in almost every sense.

In this 21st-century version of open democracy, we had the Governor General make a critical call on our political future without a word of explanation for her decision. We had a Conservative government, which normally stands broad-shouldered against deficits, usher in a period of deficits.

We had a government which stands for high ethics and transparency give us the Cadman affair, NAFTAgate, Maxime Bernier and Boobgate, the in and out affair, the shutting down of Parliament and election campaign ads featuring defecating birds.

Despite the Conservatives' repeated attempts at self-destruction, we had an opposition party so feeble that it actually lost ground against them. The Liberal leader hit new lows on the hapless meter, showing himself even incapable of producing a nationally televised video of himself that was in focus.

It was supposed to be the year in which we addressed the pressing matter of global warming. By year's end, green was pretty much forgotten and we'd moved on to other bruise-like colours.

We had a celebrated war general, Rick Hillier, who decided, just at the moment he was perhaps most needed, to call it a day. This not-so-old general faded away for no good reason and enthusiasm for our men and women in arms faded as well.

The year featured a prime minister more interested in playing political poker than in showing inspirational leadership.

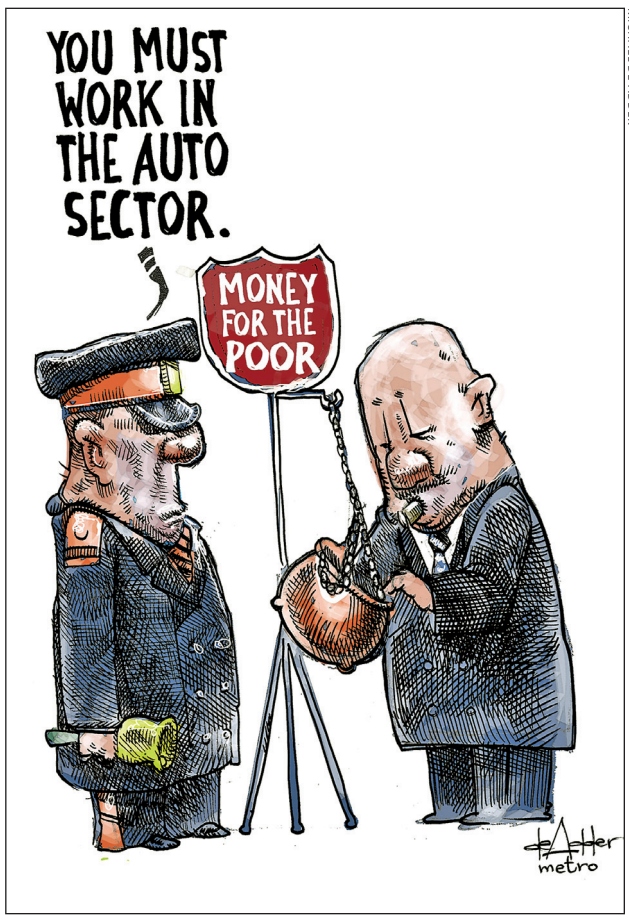
The year featured a prime minister more interested in playing political poker than in showing inspirational leadership on the major issues of our times. Stephen Harper closed down Parliament twice, once claiming it was dysfunctional when in fact he had gotten his way in the Commons almost every time. A second bolting of the doors came when Parliament threatened to dysfunction him, forcing the PM to rush off to Rideau Hall to beg for salvation.

The fiasco that was the government's economic statement typified our year in the dumps. Here we were, on the edge of a global economic meltdown, and the finance minister could do nothing better than play cheap politics with it, bringing forward a policy which threatened to starve opposing parties of financing. That in turn somehow led to a spectacularly unedifying east-versus-west debate about separatists at the gates.

It was a suitably depressing capper to a relentlessly depressing political year.

In the nation's capital, the one good thing about '08 is that '09 can hardly get worse.

Lawrence Martin is a Globe and Mail correspondent and author who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

'Powerful' message from Zambia

Tanya Kim

I returned from my first trip to Zambia recently. Taking time from my hosting duties with CTV's eTalk, I had the honour and privilege of working with CARE Canada. This non-profit organization launched the I Am Powerful campaign, which is committed to empowering women in the fight against global poverty.

In the communities we visited, I saw that with the right tools and training, combined with hard work and determination, women are able to lift themselves, their families and their communities out of complete depths of despair and poverty.

On my journey, I met extraordinary Zambian women who define what it means to be powerful. They are strong, humble and exhibit fierce resilience in situations where they could easily be defeated. They showed me what it means to be a part of a community. From village to village, I saw women working together in support of each other — from building dams, to farming their gardens, to feeding malnourished children … I feel so blessed to have experienced why the I Am Powerful initiative exists.

There is so much joy, so much pure beauty in Zambia! With so many negative images of extreme poverty associated with Africa, I am thankful that I was able to encounter a more hopeful view. In so many of the villages, we were greeted with welcome songs. The universal language of smile and song was always present, and although I was miles away from home, I felt accepted as a dear friend.

ETalk host Tanya Kim with her Zambian friends.

My goal in working with CARE on this adventure was to bring hope and inspiration to the people I met in Zambia. But instead, it was I who was filled with hope and inspiration after being so warmly welcomed into the lives and hearts of so many. The journey reminded me of the power that strength, hard work, and determination can have on making my life better.

One of the most touching moments for me was during a visit to a gardening collective. The women proudly showed me the rows of maize, potatoes and onions they were growing, and danced with joy at sharing the results of their hard work. The group sells the produce, pouring all of the profits back into helping their communities.

I left Zambia with a renewed sense of the importance of passion for your work and compassion for others. I am so fortunate to have a career I love, close family and friends, and I am reinvigorated to continue working to help the people around me. We all have a role to play in the fight against poverty. Every little bit helps in making a difference.

Tanya Kim is the host of eTalk and one of Canada's leading authorities on music and popular culture.

Letters

Decision to bail out Big Three appalling

I am writing as a concerned Canadian who is appalled by the decision to bail out the Big Three in Canada and the U.S.

I understand the role these companies play in providing jobs, and therefore their role in the greater economy. But I feel it is unjust to support them by taking from the pockets of working Canadians.

Free-market capitalism, as I understand it, dictates that producers must supply a product to the market that meets a demand, thereby securing profit and allowing said producers to remain in the marketplace, independent of government intervention. This is the same fiscal model the Conservative government of Canada endorses as a justification for the failure to address rampant homelessness, poverty and ecological irresponsibility.

Perhaps the government should, rather than handing out taxpayers' money, suggest that the Big Three work toward developing more affordable, sustainable and marketable products.

RUSSELL MCGEE, EDMONTON

Media focusing too much on the negatives

Re: How can we turn this public mood around? (Dec 19)

I'd have to agree with Mr. Sewell about the low spirit of the populace today. I must however add that I feel that the media, who tend to highlight anything negative, plays a great part in this.

Most negative occurrences today, like the economic downturn, are cyclical in nature and things will turn for the better within the forseeable future.

News reports should focus on the positives and keep up the hopes of our people.

PETER E. WYLIE, TORONTO

Spread the message of hope this Christmas

If ever the world needed the true message of Christmas, I would say it is now. I'm not talking about the preoccupation with materialism we so readily identify with this season. The real spirit of Christmas is all about hope in the midst of depression, something that we need today.

GERALD HALL, NANOOSE BAY, B.C.

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Moscow to oversee signing of 'gas OPEC' charter
Russia will oversee the creation of a more formal group of gas-exporting states today, further unsettling energy consumers worried by Moscow's clash with Kiev over gas and by its closer ties with oil body OPEC. REUTERS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Business in brief

OIL Shares in oil drilling firm Grey Wolf Inc. fell by more than half yesterday, reflecting a drop in the price of units of buyer Precision Drilling Trust, which expects to close a cash-and-shares takeover of Grey Wolf today. Precision, Canada's biggest oil and gas drilling company, announced the $2-billion US acquisition of Houston-based Grey Wolf in August as it looked to hasten an expansion of its U.S. business. Grey Wolf's shares fell $3.27, or 51 per cent, to $3.09 at midafternoon on the American Stock Exchange.

BEEF The European Union launched a case at the World Trade Organization yesterday to test whether its restrictions on beef treated with growth hormones comply with global trade rules. The EU has banned growth-promoting hormones and imports of hormone-treated meat since the early 1980s, but this ban has been challenged by the United States and Canada. REUTERS

Recession mindset fuels consumer slide

Consumer confidence in Canada dropped for a third consecutive month in December, hitting a 27-year low as a "psychology of recession" tightened its grip on Canadians, the Conference Board of Canada said yesterday.

The index in December fell to 67.7 from 71 in November, the lowest mark since the 63 recorded during the recession of 1981-82. The index was 100 in 2002.

"Consumers continue to be gloomy about their financial situation, indicating that they are financially worse off today than they were six months ago. Similarly, they expect to be worse off six months from now," Conference Board chief economist Glen Hodgson told a news conference.

"Consumers continue to be gloomy ... indicating that they are financially worse off today than they were six months ago."
Glen Hodgson

He also said the board was revising its forecast for 2009 and would most likely come out with a gloomier set of figures early in the new year. REUTERS

Toyota predicts its first operating loss

AUTOS Toyota Motor Corp., the world's biggest automaker, yesterday forecast its first group operating loss due to a relentless global slide in car sales and a crippling rise in the yen.

Toyota had been expected to issue its second profit warning in less than seven weeks, but the downward revision was bigger than predicted.

Toyota cut its group operating forecast to a loss of 150 billion yen ($1.7 billion US) for the year to end-March after slashing its group operating profit forecast last month by one trillion yen to 600 billion yen. REUTERS

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MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong
choochonghcga@yahoo.ca

Q If I used my CIBC RRSP shares for paying down my mortgage and the balance to re-purchase another stock, what capital gains will I pay? Can I defer my Homebuyers Plan repayment this year? Sameer

A You are not taxed on the capital appreciation in your RRSP but withdrawals will be fully taxable at your marginal tax rate. The repurchase of stocks will not reduce your tax burden and you must include, as income, the annual non-repayment of HBP. Plan for what could be the worst recession in several decades.

Increase income:

Look for opportunities to increase your income. Ask for a raise, another position or more work (pay as well) at your current job. Second jobs can do wonders. It's more interesting than a couch potato.

Consolidate credit cards and bank accounts

Keep no more than one or two credit cards. Why have temptations? Why pay interest on some cards at 12 per cent and others at 28 per cent? Get rid of the higher interest cards. Reduce bank charges on your bank accounts. Who needs a chequing, savings, chequing-savings, high interest savings, low fee chequing accounts? One or two are all you need.

Invest on a regular basis:

Don't just invest when the stock market is booming.

Reach Henry Choo Chong, CGA, at choochonghcga@yahoo.ca.

'Tis the season to give back

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By now you've probably done your fair share of dodging crowds at the mall and most likely made the majority of your obligatory party rounds — gaining a pound or two in the process!

And as your thoughts turn to how you are going to complete the holiday shopping in time, it's important to take a time out to consider helping those less fortunate. We've compiled a list of ways that you and your family can give back this holiday season without taking up too much time or money.

Time:

Donating your time to a cause is an incredibly generous way to give. Choose an organization that is important to you and would be in need of volunteers. Maybe you have a charity that are involved with or you have heard of a local charity that you think would be a good fit.

Skills:

Just like we suggest you use your skills and experience to barter for products or services, you can also use your skills and services to give back. Some of us use our marketing/PR skills to give back to local organizations like Feed the Need and Quest. Consider a skill that you have that would be helpful to a charitable organization. Anything from working on an organization's website, to writing newsletters, recruiting volunteers or organizing fundraising activities would be appreciated.

Items:

At this time of year many charities prefer unwrapped gifts and food donations. However there are a number of organizations that will take everything from gently used clothing items to household items, blankets, etc. Contact your local shelters to find out what they need the most during the holidays.

Every little bit counts for families in need this season.

Money:

When donating money to a charity, make sure they are a trustworthy and well managed organization so you are able to give confidently. You want to ensure your hard earned and generous donation is going towards the right thing. It's a great idea to contact the organization of interest and ask about how donated money is allocated and what the short and long terms goals are of the organization. It's also a great idea to confirm how much money you need to donate in order to receive a tax receipt.

If our wallets are feeling the pinch then you can be certain all of the organizations that assist others are also feeling it. Every little bit counts for families in need this season.

For a list of local charities in your area check out charity.com

Happy Giving and Happy Holidays!

Contact us at smartcookies@metronews.ca. For more tips for saving and giving back, check out Smart Cookies Guide to Making More Dough, available in bookstores.

Tune in Wednesday night at 9 p.m. EST/PST on the W Network and be sure to visit smartcookies.com for more tips.

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Allan Small

The week's column investigates whether it's a good time to buy gold. Visit metronews.ca

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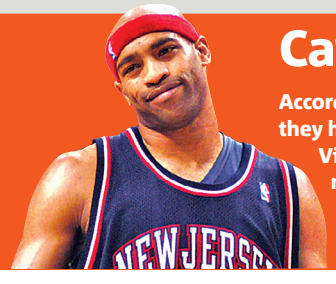
No suspense for top racing awards
Somebeachsomewhere was a unanimous selection for the O'Brien trophy, Standardbred Canada announced yesterday in unveiling the respective finalists for Canadian harness racing's top awards. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports



Cavaliers deny interest in V.C.

According to a report by CBS Sports, the Cleveland Cavaliers have denied they have interest in trading for Nets star and former Toronto Raptor Vince Carter. The Cavs are expected to be a player in the NBA trade market before the trading deadline on Feb. 19.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Canadian GM flies Falcons to surprise playoff spot

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

High atop the list of most excellent executives in the NFL this year — right up there alongside legendary league luminary Bill Parcells — is a former University of Guelph student who once served as a not-so-glorified gopher for the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Were it not for the worst-to-first ascent of Parcells's Miami Dolphins, in fact, Thomas Dimitroff would be a shoo-in as the NFL's top exec of 2008.

Last January, Dimitroff accepted an offer to become Atlanta Falcons general manager, a position several established NFLers flat-out rejected. The reason was that the Falcons were dogged — you should pardon the expression — by unprecedented nightmares last year. They were 4-12.

Their franchise quarterback — Michael Vick — was jailed because of his role in a dogfighting ring.

Their coach, Bob Petrino, quit after 13 games to return to college football.

Desperate, owner Arthur Blank turned to Dimitroff, who was scouting for the New England Patriots. Dimitroff hired Jacksonville Jaguars defensive co-ordinator Mike Smith as coach, acquired running back Michael Turner as a free agent and chose quarterback Matt Ryan third overall in the NFL draft.

All three flourished, and on Sunday, the Falcons qualified for the post-season.

"Never thought this could happen this year, never," Blank told Metro Sunday after Atlanta's playoff-clinching triumph in Minnesota. "This is the season of miracles, thanks to Thomas."

Those of us who followed the CFL closely in the late 1990s knew Dimitroff as a poorly paid (about $16,000 a year) front-office employee in Saskatchewan.

After an ordinary stint as a defensive halfback at Guelph, he joined the Riders for odd jobs, ranging from ticket sales to promotions.

Football was in his blood. His father was a football lifer. Tom Dimitroff coached and scouted in the CFL and NFL before dying of kidney cancer in 1996.

The junior Dimitroff grew up in Ontario as his dad coached in Ottawa and Hamilton. Tom Sr. continually advised his son to chase his GM dreams by paying his dues.

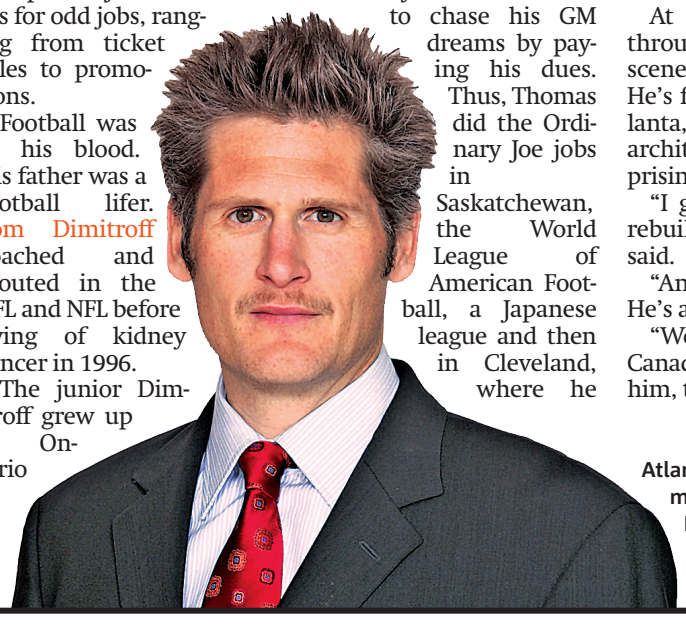
Thus, Thomas did the Ordinary Joe jobs in Saskatchewan, the World League of American Football, a Japanese league and then in Cleveland, where he spent much of his time literally painting the Browns' football field.

At 42, Dimitroff is through with behind-the-scenes work in football. He's front and centre in Atlanta, the toast of the town, architect of an awfully surprising playoff team.

"I gave Thomas years to rebuild our team," Blank said.

"And he did it in months. He's a special guy.

"We're very proud of him. Canada should be proud of him, too."



Atlanta Falcons general manager Thomas Dimitroff played football at the University of Guelph.

Questions raised over age of NBA player Yi Jianlian

NBA A media report carrying school photographs and an identification card has raised doubts about Chinese NBA player Yi Jianlian's age, less than two weeks after 26 local players were found to have falsified birth dates.

New Jersey Nets forward Yi, China's fourth NBA player, is officially 21, but a cloud of suspicion surrounded his age before he was picked sixth by Milwaukee Bucks in the 2007 NBA draft.

Yi has consistently refused to answer questions about his age. Suspicion of age fraud has long been a hallmark of China's state-run sports system.

A report carried on the Chinese website of Sports Illustrated magazine yesterday but posted on the reporter's blog last week showed a high school identity card carrying the name Yi Jianlian and a birth date of Oct. 27, 1984 — three years older than the NBA player's official birth date.

The boy in the photo attached to the identity card, dated Oct. 20, 1997, also bears a resemblance to the player.

Yi Jianlian

The report quoted residents and teachers in Yi's hometown in southern China and in Shenzhen, his longtime place of residence, who cast doubt on the player's age.

China's basketball administration said it was looking into the report but added it would "take time."

REUTERS

NHL Pogge in net for Leafs

GETTY IMAGES

Justin Pogge looks for a shot from Ilya Kovalchuk last night. Pogge started in net for Toronto but was rarely tested as the Maple Leafs beat the Atlanta Thrashers 6-2.

Sports in brief

NHL Dallas Stars left wing Loui Eriksson, Philadelphia Flyers centre Jeff Carter and New Jersey Devils left wing Patrik Elias were named the NHL's Three Stars for the week ending Dec. 21. Eriksson scored an NHL-leading six goals in three games last week, helping the Stars earn five of six possible points.

MLB The New York Yankees and starting pitcher Chien-Ming Wang agreed to a one-year, $5-million US contract yesterday, avoiding arbitration. Wang went 8-2 with a 4.07 earned-run average in 15 starts in 2008 before being placed on the disabled list with a foot injury in June.

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Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Money doesn't buy happiness

Study finds people crave sense of purpose

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

Next time someone in an expensive SUV cuts you off, take solace in this: Money can buy fancy cars, but it can't buy happiness.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MD., studied happiness from a scientific perspective, including its genetic, psychological, sociological and biological underpinnings.

They found that it's not the almighty dollar that makes people happy, but rather a sense of purpose. This may be a good message to remember as we head into the holidays during a tough recession, when many have less spending money. Although living in abject poverty is not conducive to happiness, once you have the basic things you need in life, higher levels of income don't increase happiness.

Happiness can be measured — but not bought, scientists reported in the December issue of Mayo Clinic Women's HealthSource.

Your age and stage of life also have an effect on happiness. Middle age is a particularly stressful time of life, according to a study of about two million people in almost 80 countries. Mental distress peaks for women at around 40 and for men at around 50. Later in life, in your 60s and 70s, you tend to be more content. (Perhaps because the kids with their clutter have moved away?)

Get active

- Want to be happier? Researchers suggest intentionally participating in activities you enjoy. It sounds obvious, but most of us probably don't do it often enough. CELIA MILNE /FOR METRO CANADA

Social connectedness is another factor that increases happiness. This may help explain why women, on the whole, are happier than men. While women tend to join clubs, classes, and social groups, men — especially older men — often allow themselves to become socially isolated. Although they may not initially realize it, this ultimately makes men less happy than women.

Life circumstances cannot be ignored in measuring happiness: Events that occur — good or bad — definitely have an effect on well-being, but some people are quite resilient even in the face of negative circumstances.

Genes play a role here, perhaps even accounting for as much as half of individual differences in well-being. Thinking positively, or seeing the world through rose-coloured glasses, may be largely genetic. Optimistic people tend to live longer.

Gaining more education boosts happiness, probably because it provides more choices in life. Not surprisingly, so does excellent health. Health and happiness are closely tied to each other.

Happiness can be measured — but not bought, scientists report.

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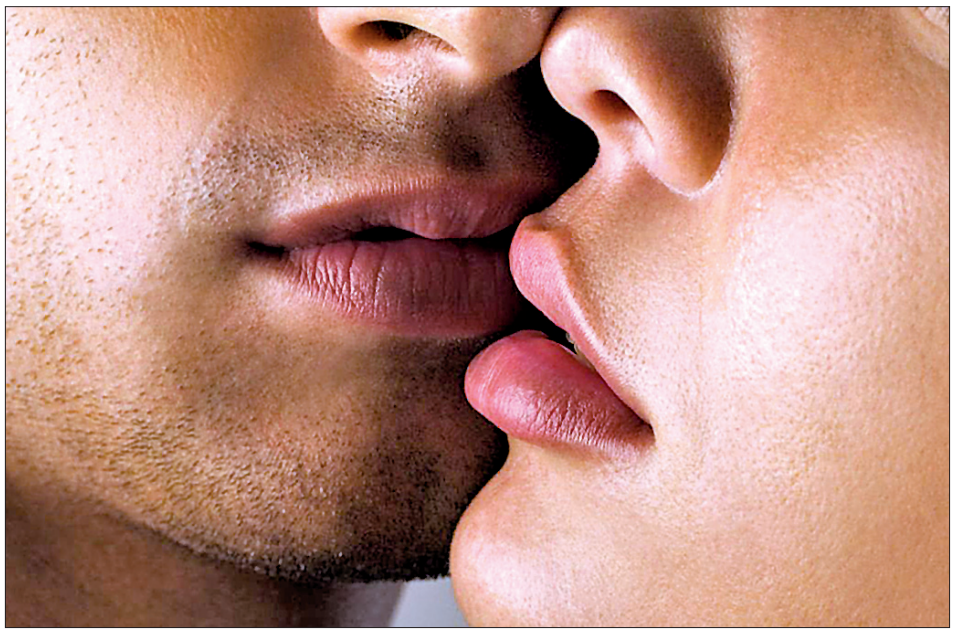
Battling breast-cancer recurrence
Certain breast-cancer survivors who load up on fruits and vegetables, eating far more than current U.S. guidelines, can slash their risk the tumours will come back by nearly a third, according to a U.S. study. **REUTERS**

When innocence goes up for sale

The J Spot


Saving your virginity until marriage is a choice made for health, moral and/or religious reasons.

But, the fact is, there's really no way to prove whether a girl has done it. The most popular idea that an intact hymen is proof of her virginity is completely false, says Hanne Blank, American historian and author of Virgin: The Untouched History.

You have to wonder how Mary got everyone to believe she was a pregnant virgin. Sure, that whole Immaculate Conception was a pretty clever ruse but Joseph had to be at least a little suspicious on their wedding night.

I wondered the same thing when I heard guys were bidding millions to be 22-year-old San Diego-based Natalie Dylan's first.

Earlier in the fall, Dylan (not her real name) auctioned off her virginity to the highest bidder in order to help pay for graduate school to become a marriage and family therapist. Bids came in from over 5,000 men and ranged from $1 to $3.8 million.

If I'm spending that kind of dough, I'd want proof.

But, the fact is, there's really no way to prove whether a girl has done it. The most popular idea that an intact hymen is proof of her virginity is completely false, says Hanne Blank, American historian and author of Virgin: The Untouched History.

Hymens run the gamut, says Blank, from thick and resilient to thin and fragile, making them easy to break in a myriad of ways and therefore lousy indicators of whether a young woman has had intercourse yet or not.

In fact, medical research isn't really sure why women even have a hymen. Some research suggests that it is simply vestigial tissue that is, tissue that possibly once had a function in a different evolutionary stage but has since become redundant, much like our appendix.

Unfortunately, says Blank, they found a use for it when men become landowners they needed to know who their kids were so they could hand down their property (known as the paternity-property hypothesis in biology and anthropology circles).

The easiest way to do this was to marry a verified virgin. And proving that this flimsy bit of membrane was still intact seemed a plausible enough method of verification.

Except, as mentioned, given its flimsy nature, the state of a woman's hymen is a lousy way to prove virginity.

As result, people have come up with all kinds of ways to create this proof, like inserting a vial of pig's blood in the young woman's vagina on her wedding night so it would burst and stain the sheets or undergoing hymen restoration surgery, increasingly popular among mostly Muslim immigrants in Europe who want to have their virginity "restored" for marriage.

Saving your virginity until marriage is a personal choice made for health, moral and/or religious reasons. Fine.

But undergoing surgery to "restore" your virginity or spending millions for a one-night stand with a virgin seems like a high price to pay for something you can't even prove. In the business world, this would be considered a really bad investment.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

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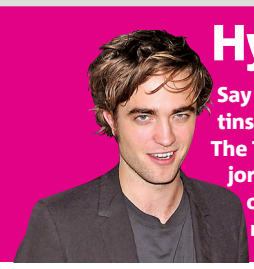
Madagascar 2 dominates foreign box offices

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa hurdled to the forefront of the foreign box office with weekend sales of $33.5 million from 56 territories. The animated film opened in 10 markets and was welcomed in the No. 1 spot by Italy and Australia, as well as Hong Kong and New Zealand. REUTERS

Entertainment



Hyped hair

Say good-bye to Robert Pattinson's sexy tousled locks. The Twilight star caused a major frenzy when he stepped out this weekend with a new crew cut. PEOPLE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Winslet explores post-war guilt

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

Based on a plot description, The Reader sounds like a conventional piece of Hollywood's end-of-the-year awards mongering. After all, it is a tragic love story told over the backdrop of the Holocaust.

Kate Winslet stars in the morally complex story The Reader.

Movie **profile**

However, dismissing the movie on this level would do it a disservice. Much like the award-winning Bernhard Schlink novel that it's based on, the film is actually a morally complex story about the challenges that the young people of post-Second World War Germany faced when accepting the atrocities carried out by the previous generation.

The Reader — it opens Christmas Day — might start as a romance between Kate Winslet and a young boy, but things change drastically when the boy discovers that Winslet's character was once a guard at a concentration camp.

Dealing with the Holocaust and Germany's post-war guilt without needlessly moralizing or sentimentalizing the subject is no easy task, but director Stephen Daldry (The Hours) jumped at the opportunity.

"It was always something that I've wanted to do," he says.

"I hope audiences have as many different reactions as possible. I think it is a complex story and there is a great ambiguity to the book. One of the things we tried very hard to do was to maintain that ambiguity."

Daldry's approach to the material is admirable, but his film never would have worked without a talented actress to take on the lead role of the illiterate, Nazi, cradle-robber Hannah Smitz. Winslet was a fan of the book, but despite how much she enjoyed playing the role, even she refuses to forgive the atrocities of her own character.

"My job as the actress is to understand the character and ultimately love them. And I did love Hannah, because I understood her profoundly. Did I sympathize with her? Yes, but that doesn't mean that I sympathize with SS guards in general, not at all. I don't forgive her," says Winslet.

"But that's what I love about the film. It's not a film about forgiveness or reconciliation. It's a story about regret, because you don't choose who you fall in love with."

Doubt a dream for Davis

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Viola Davis may get recognized mostly for playing the tiny role of a crack mother in the 2002 drama Antwone Fisher, but that's about to change — even if it's not for a boost in screen time.

With one lengthy, powerful scene in the upcoming drama Doubt, Davis isn't just holding her own opposite Meryl Streep, she's winning the hearts of moviegoers and critics. Another modest part for the 43-year-old, self-described "working actor," it's already garnered her an award from the National Board of Review and some very juicy Oscar buzz.

It's certainly not an accolade that's undeserved. In Doubt, Davis plays the mother of a child suspected of being victimized by a Catholic priest in 1960s New York.

When confronted by the alarmed school principal (Streep), Davis introduces a startling perspective. It's a rich, revelatory scene that has been described as the "crucible of the story."

Not lost on Davis, she developed her own 50-page biography of the character before filming began.

"I'm a neurotic actor, are you kidding me? I'm a theatre geek, I work on neuroses," Davis said. "When you only have one scene ... you're bringing a whole life into that scene with you."

Besides, when you're working opposite Streep, one of the silver screen's legends, you want to have your act together. "(It feels like) a big tornado hit just like in the Wizard of Oz," Davis said proudly. Doubt opens Christmas Day.

DVD picks

The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor

Director: Rob Cohen
Rating: PG-13

SEVEN LONG YEARS after this irredeemable action series last busted our block, a third instalment of The Mummy arrives to demonstrate just how badly CGI and fan loyalty can be abused. Rachel Weisz, whose lively banter with co-star Brendan Fraser helped relieve the tedium of digital cadavers, took a pass on this quick-buck exercise.

Also missing in action is Stephen Sommers, director of the first two films. His limitations seem positively trivial compared to the awesome hackitude of his successor Rob Cohen. Then there's the matter of the missing mummy. The fearsome undead Imhotep has been replaced by digitized Chinese terracotta warriors led by Jet Li's ceramic-chewing cameo of a fascist emperor.

Burn After Reading

Directors: Joel, Ethan Coen
Rating: R

YOU FORGIVE THE SILLY PLOT of this screwball spy comedy from Joel and Ethan Coen because of the adroitness of the character interaction and wordplay. It's their best laugher in a decade, cynically observing the "idiocy of today" in a paranoid and litigious Washington, D.C., where spooks tangle with angry spouses and grasping fitness-centre employees. It could make you feel sorry for the people tasked with the seemingly hopeless job of maintaining homeland security: "Now it seems like it's all bureaucracy and no mission," a character ruefully observes. John Malkovich is the linchpin of an A-list circus that includes George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Tilda Swinton, Frances McDormand and J.K. Simmons, all in top form.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mockingbird director dies at age 83

PEOPLE Robert Mulligan, who received an Oscar nomination for directing To Kill a Mockingbird, died Friday of heart disease at his Connecticut home. He was 83.

Known for his diffident nature and sensitivity toward players, Mulligan directed five different actors in Oscar-nominated performances: Gregory Peck and Mary Badham in Mockingbird, Natalie Wood (Love with the Proper Stranger), Ruth Gordon (Inside Daisy Clover), and Ellen Burstyn (Same Time, Next Year). Peck won the Oscar for his lead role as attorney Atticus Finch in Mockingbird.

The older brother of late actor Richard Mulligan, he earned his stripes in live TV in New York in the early 1950s on such productions as Studio One and Playhouse 90 before becoming a movie director in 1957 with the drama Fear Strikes Out, the story of baseball pitcher Jimmy Piersall, starring Anthony Hopkins.

REUTERS

Olympics special on NBC

Thought you had heard the last of the Olympics until 2010? Think again. On Saturday, NBC will broadcast Beijing Olympics Opening Ceremony: TV Event of the Year, a two-hour special hosted by Bob Costas and Matt Lauer, according to The Hollywood Reporter. TVGUIDE.COM

Shows stuck in TV limbo

Most TV shows exit the airwaves with a flurry of headlines memorializing their demise. Sometimes, though, a program fades from the spotlight into a scheduling twilight zone: neither declared dead nor returning.

Here's the lowdown on some missing-in-action titles from this year that most expected to see again but which have no airdates on the horizon:

NBC'S AMERICAN GLADIATORS: Gladiators ready? No, gladiators are not ready. This competition-series revival enjoyed terrific ratings for its initial run during the Hollywood writers strike early this year. A second season launched in May and suffered a sharp drop in viewers, with ratings fading throughout its summer run. NBC has not mentioned Gladiators on the record, but it's considered cancelled.

FOX'S THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: Another strike-era reality hit, this, too, saw a ratings decline during its summer run. Unlike Gladiators, though, Truth isn't very expensive, and Fox has shot unaired episodes for a new season. Given the troubled economy and the show's controversial content, sources said garnering advertiser support hasn't been easy. No airdate is planned for Truth.

CBS' ELITEXC SATURDAY NIGHT FIGHTS: CBS planned four experimental off-brand specials and aired three, two of which performed well among younger demographics. With EliteXC declaring bankruptcy in October, though, the fourth special is not happening. CBS could align with another mixed-martial-arts partner but has not found or sought one.

FOX'S 'TIL DEATH AND ABC'S ACCORDING TO JIM: Both are modestly rated, critically indifferent sitcoms produced by their networks' sister studios that fill schedule holes when needed. Death is off the air, but a midseason appearance is likely. Jim will leave the air shortly, and ABC plans to air its remaining 12 episodes in the summer unless called into action earlier. REUTERS

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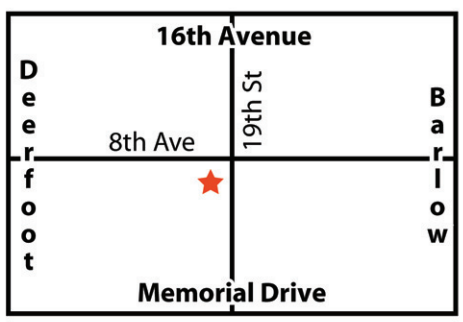

Host mulls return to Hardball

SHOW MSNBC may find out soon whether Hardball host Chris Matthews returns to the invigorated channel.

Matthews, 63, is said to be considering an offer from NBC to remain as host of Hardball, a job he's held for more than a decade, or to return to his native Pennsylvania to run for the U.S. Senate against GOP incumbent Arlen Specter.

There are indications that a decision could come soon, sometime before Inaugural Day on Jan. 20. But MSNBC president Phil Griffin declined late last week to say whether that's true.

Chris Matthews

"I've talked to Chris. I think he's going to be here for a long time," Griffin said. "I want him to be here for a long time." Griffin said that there would be "clarity" soon.

Matthews, who is believed to make roughly $5 million a year, declined an interview, according to a spokesman. REUTERS

In brief

WEREVOLVES Talk about a hairy Sex and the City. The Fox network has ordered a script for Bitches, a comedy-drama about a quartet of female friends in New York who are werewolves. The project, described as a quirky urban fairy tale, hails from feature writer Michael Dougherty, who wrote the recent werewolf horror flick Trick 'r Treat. REUTERS

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CA	Vu	SC	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/23/08 primetime	267	351 - ACCESS	Help TV		The Mentalist (HDTV)		*Chasing Christmas* (2005, Drama) Tom Arnold.				Help TV
	243	317 3 CFCN	Corner Gas	Hollywood	Law & Order: SVU		*Stolen Miracle* (2001, Drama) Leslie Hope.				News (N)
	-	- 4 OMNI	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News		News		The Simpsons	Chinese Rest.	Metropia
	-	371 5 KXLY	4 News at 6	4 News at 6:30	Entertainment	The Insider (N)	Grinch Stole Christmas		Rediscovered (N)		ABC's the List
	245	306 6 CBRT	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	*Miracle on 34th Street* ★★★ (1994, Fantasy)				CBC News: The National		The Hour
	244	338 7 CICT	ET Canada	Entertainment	ReGenesis		House (HDTV PA)		(10:01) NCIS (HDTV)		News Hour
	246	- 8 CKAL	Law & Order: SVU		Rediscovered (N)		Privileged (HDTV)		Hates Chris	Friends	Your City
	119	705 9 CBXFT	Antarctique	La Petite vie	(7:57) La Petite vie (SC)		Grand Rire de Québec		Le Téléjournal (N) (SC)		TJ Ouest
	-	- 10 SHAW	(6) Local Programming						Local Programming		
	-	372 12 KREM	News (N)	Health Link Sp	The Doctors		Home for the Holidays		NCIS "Requiem" (HDTV)		The Mentalist
	-	374 14 KSPS	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer		Nova (HDTV) (DVS)				Wild! (DVS)		Independent
	502	390 15 CBC	CBC News: The National		Snowdon and Margaret		CBC News: The National		CBC News: The National		Snowdon
	-	370 16 KHQ	College Basketball		Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel-Fortune	Law & Order (HDTV)		Law & Order: SVU		Law/Ord SVU
	-	373 22 KAYU	The Simpsons	Raymond	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	House (HDTV PA)		(10:01) Fringe		News (N)
	297	652 37 WPIX	Privileged (HDTV)		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men	Friends	Sex and-City	According-Jim	Frasier
news	500	500 29 CNN	Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)				Larry King Live		Cooper 360
	508	502 31 CNN2	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Nancy Grace		Showbiz Tonight		Lou Dobbs Tonight		Nancy Grace
sports	400	400 21 TSN	Junior Hockey	SportsCentre	NHL Hockey Vancouver Canucks at San Jose Sharks. (HDTV) (Live)					SportsCentre	Poker
	408	418 27 net	NHL Hockey Anaheim Ducks at Calgary Flames. (HDTV) (Live)					Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Connected		Best-Sports
	410	403 30 SCORE	(5:30) Court Surfing		Score Tonight		Hardcore Hockey Talk		Final Score	Final Score	Final Score
	411	457 44 OLN	Mantracker		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter
	417	406 48 SPEED	Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Hot Import	Hot Import	Pinks	Pass Time	Low Life	Low Life	Super Bikes!
family	552	543 20 YTV	Charlie Brown	Flint Christmas	Red-Nosed Reindeer		Malcolm-Mid.	Fresh Prince	Fries That?	Mystery Hnt.	Martin Mystery
	557	541 39 FAM	Zoey 101	Life Derek	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School
	555	545 67 TOON	(6:30) *A Dennis the Menace Christmas*			Gotta Catch Santa Claus		Stardust		Futurama	American Dad
cable variety	575	583 11 CMT	Reba	Reba	Three Wishes		Live & Up Front: Doc Walker		Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba
	553	546 17 TREE	Backyardigans	Maggie-Beast	Comfy Couch	Rolie Polie Olie	Beren. Bears	Babar	Backyardigans	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!
	-	- 18 CHTV	Tube Tales	TV Made, Do It	Inside Hollywood		*Christmas Caper* (2007, Comedy-Drama) Premiere.				News (N)
	505	398 19 TWN	(5) EarthWatch One		EarthWatch One		EarthWatch Two				
	602	568 23 W	(6) *Stolen Miracle* (2001)		Friends	Will & Grace	Shopping Bags	Shopping Bags	*Crazy for Christmas* (2005, Drama)		
	521	560 24 TLC	Mystery Diagnosis		Dr. G: Medical Examiner		World's Heaviest Man		Mystery Diagnosis		Med. Examiner
	603	561 25 FOOD	The F Word		Chef School	At the Table	Restaurant Makeover		Unwrapped		The F Word
	615	520 26 A&E	The First 48 (HDTV)		Manhunters	Manhunters	Runaway	Jacked: Theft	The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48
	617	522 32 SHOW	EastEnders	Vivienne Vyle	*Recipe for a Perfect Christmas* (2005, Romance-Comedy)				Testees	Trailer Park	House
	601	562 33 SLICE	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		End of Leash	End of Leash	ET Canada	Matchmaker	Date My Ex: Jo & Slade		Trading Sp
	-	633 34 ENC2	(7:10) *Winter Stories* ★★ (1999, Drama), Denis Bouchard				*It Happened One Christmas* ★★ (1977, Fantasy)				*Michael (1996)*
	520	505 35 DISC	Destroyed	Destroyed	Dirty Jobs Turkey farm.		Daily Planet		Destroyed	Destroyed	Dirty Jobs
	620	523 36 BRAVO	Come Into the Parlour		Tell It On The Mountain		Law & Order "Standoff"		Without a Trace		*Tao of Steve*
	294	650 40 WPCH	(6) *The Mighty Ducks* (1992)		Cheers	Seinfeld	Family Guy	Family Guy	*The Mighty Ducks* ★★ (1992, Comedy)		
	626	547 41 COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	S. Silverman
	-	539 42 TCM	*In Summertime*	(7:45) *A Guy Named Joe* ★★ (1943, Fantasy) Spencer Tracy. (DVS)					*Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* (1944) (DVS)		
	628	584 43 SPIKE	UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed		MANswers	MANswers	Tenacious D: Masterworks 2		Trek: Voyager
	522	516 45 HIST	Outlaw Bikers		NCIS "Light Sleeper"		Outlaw Bikers		Ax Men "Black Friday"		NCIS
	627	528 46 SPACE	The Dresden Files		Zombiemania		Stargate SG-1		Lost		Deep Space 9
	-	- 47 AMC	(6) *Prancer* ★★ (1989, Fantasy)			*A Christmas Carol* ★★ (1984, Fantasy) George C. Scott.				(10:45) *Christmas Eve*	
	619	525 49 TROP	Planet Soap	Big Screen	Beverly Hills, 90210		Planet Soap	What Happen?	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
	600	564 50 HGTV	Sarah's House	Design Inc.	Colin & Justin's Home Heist		Holmes on Homes		Sarah's House	Design Inc.	Pure Design
	501	391 52 CTV	CTV Newsnet		News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News
	504	508 70 BNN	Squeeze Play		Market Call		Headline	Market Call	Commodities	Business News	Squeeze Play
	526	507 92 VIVA	The West Wing		Encounters	In Dreams	Psychic Inv.	Encounters	Judging Amy		Commander
	269	350 93 APTN	Wings-Canada	Great Towns	Wapos Bay	Rez Rides	*Kidz in the Wood* (1996, Comedy) Dave Thomas, Julia Duffy.				Respect
	-	- 94 MCP	(6:30) News	News	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	Officina Italian	Qui si Parla	In Germany	Euromaxx	Schauplatz
	571	581 100 MMM	Celine Dion: Woman		Celebrity Wrestling		Tommy Lee	Tommy Lee	Don't Forget the Lyrics!		Party of Five
	570	580 101 MM	Punk'd	Punk'd	Punk'd	Punk'd	Punk'd	Punk'd	Much Comes Clean		MuchOnDem
	581	566 102 MTV	A Double Shot of Love		A Double Shot of Love (N)		MTV Live	After	Next	Mom & Dad	Double Shot

critics' corner

Miracle on 34th Street
Even if your heart belongs to the 1947 original with Edmund Gwenn, Maureen O'Hara and Natalie Wood, this 1994 remake of the holiday classic isn't half bad. Richard Attenborough plays the store Santa who believes with all his heart that he's the real deal, with Elizabeth Perkins and Mara Wilson as the cynical mother and daughter he has to convince. 8 PM on CBRT

House
Rock climbing requires fast reflexes, and when a woman suddenly can't move her hands, her daughter almost pays the price. House tries to figure out what is causing the paralysis and the lady's additional symptoms of blindness and decreased immune system activity in "It's a Wonderful Lie." 9 PM on CICT, KAYU

10th Annual A Home for the Holidays With Faith Hill
The country singer lends extra star power to the latest edition of the annual special that advocates adoption. As always, it offers true stories of families that have benefited from taking in a new member. Other performers include Gavin Rossdale, Jamie Foxx and Tim McGraw — aka Mr. Hill. 9 PM on KREM

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Twilight's Taylor to be replaced in sequel?
Rumours have been running rampant that Twilight star Taylor Lautner, who played Jacob Black, will be replaced in the sequel, New Moon, tvguide.com reports. IMDB.COM

Celebrity Buzz

Matt details road trip adventure

PEOPLE Matthew McConaughey was rescued by an 82-year-old Mexican woman named Matty after his truck broke down, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actor was on a 14-day road trip to Baja, Calif. with a friend when the pair's vehicle broke down in the middle of the desert.

Matty loaned McConaughey her 1981 Isuzu truck, he says. "That truck got us to a place where we could get the gear to fix my truck and get back on the road."

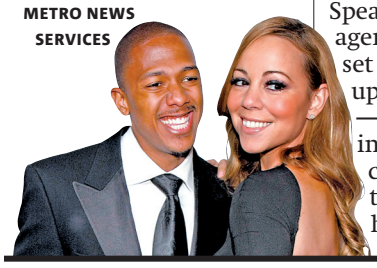
METRO NEWS SERVICES

Nick Cannon's ex speaks out about Mariah marriage

RELATIONSHIP Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon's secret wedding may have surprised fans, but it also caught someone else off guard — Cannon's ex-girlfriend Christina Milian, people.com reports.

"I was like, 'Really?' It just seemed like a weird match," says the singer and actress tells Rap-Up magazine. "But I was happy for him. I always feel like Nick works hard to get what he wants, whether that be women — that's how he got me."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Amy's topless vacay splashed on tabs

PEOPLE Amy Winehouse is making a splash across the British tabloids thanks to her revealing holiday, where she was photographed on the beach and on her balcony sans top, popeater.com reports.

Still, though the tabs are swarming over the nudity, they're generous with the compliments when it comes to her appearance.

The Daily Mail says Winehouse "looks the picture of health as she piles on the pounds" in the new photos, in which it's obvious she's put some pounds on her once-frail frame.

The Sun was a bit less congratulatory, running video of and describing a topless dance that Winehouse did on the balcony of her St. Lucia hotel room. They describe it as a "bizarre balcony boogie," saying Winehouse "was caught on video as she lurched from one side to another, waving her arms."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Britney and Benji rumours denied

DATING As one might have guessed, all those rumours linking Britney Spears and Benji Madden were completely false, popeater.com reports. The singers definitely aren't dating, Spears' rep told E! News. "The claims made by In Touch are completely false ... There is not an ounce of truth to any of it," she said.

Last week, In Touch magazine claimed Spears' father Jamie Spears and her manager Larry Rudolph set the two stars up on a few dates — creating an instant love connection. But have no fear. Spears isn't jumping back into the dating game with Paris Hilton's ex just yet, says her rep.

Since the release of her album Circus, Spears has been linked to several celebrities including Chace Crawford, Jesse Metcalfe and Michael Phelps. None of which panned out or have been confirmed.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sam hospitalized for depression?

PEOPLE Samantha Ronson is reportedly suffering from depression, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

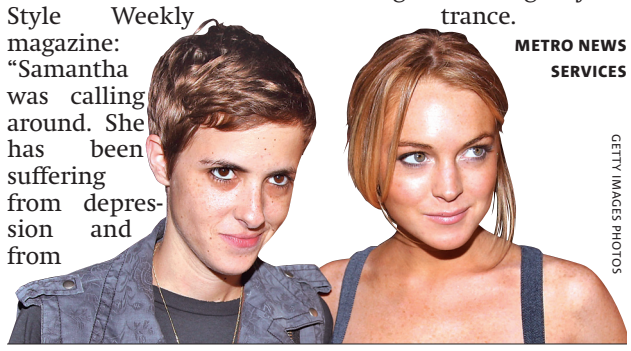
The 31-year-old DJ was accompanied by girlfriend Lindsay Lohan as she visited Los Angeles' Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre on Sunday — less than a day after it was reported she had been making frantic phone calls to friends complaining of stress and exhaustion.

A source told Life and Style Weekly magazine: "Samantha was calling around. She has been suffering from depression and from lack of food and sleep. Lindsay has been helping her through this as she has been through it herself two years ago."

Doctors were reportedly called to Samantha's home shortly before she visited the medical facility.

Despite her trip to Cedars-Sinai being described as "relatively minor," witnesses say Samantha was taken into the hospital in a wheelchair through the emergency entrance.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Ritchie rebounds with heiress Khan

RELATIONSHIP Just as their divorce settlement was making news, Madonna's ex-husband, Guy Ritchie, appeared to be celebrating his freedom and the holidays with someone new — millionaire heiress Jemima Khan, people.com reports.

The two attended a London dinner party together earlier this month at the home of public relations honcho Matthew Freud and his wife, Elisabeth Murdoch, daughter of media mogul Rupert Murdoch, reports London's Telegraph.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sandler dresses up as a princess for storytime

PEOPLE Adam Sandler dresses up as a princess to read his daughters stories, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actor likes to get into character when he regales tales to Sadie, two, and newborn Sunny.

Adam, 42, said: "I like to dress up as the lead character in whatever story I am reading. This is a little weird because my daughter loves the Disney princesses. But you'd be surprised at how good I look in a ball gown.

"I hold the storybook and make up my own stories with the characters. This backfired when my daughter started watching movies and realized that Cinderella didn't drive for NASCAR."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

'Boy' Beyoncé jogs incognito in park

PEOPLE Beyoncé Knowles likes dressing as a boy, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer dons male clothes so she can go running incognito. "I love being able to run in Central Park. Just me and my trainer. I dress up like a boy and then no one knows it's me," she says.

Her latest hit If I Were a Boy details what she would like to do if she were able to swap gender for a day.

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How to turn him on

Men can be mysterious creatures, especially when it comes to what turns them on. Wouldn't it be great to know exactly what gets him hot? Read what real men say gets them in the mood.

Getting all hot and bothered starts with just getting together. Let your man know when the time is right and he'll be more than happy to skip out on a boys night out in exchange for what you have in mind.

Ask your guy to tell you where he likes to be touched. There are more than just the obvious hotspots. Even better, try to figure it out together.

Being confident in bed is sexy. Don't force something you're not comfortable with. Stick with what feels right and it'll enhance the mood for the both of you.

(continued online...)

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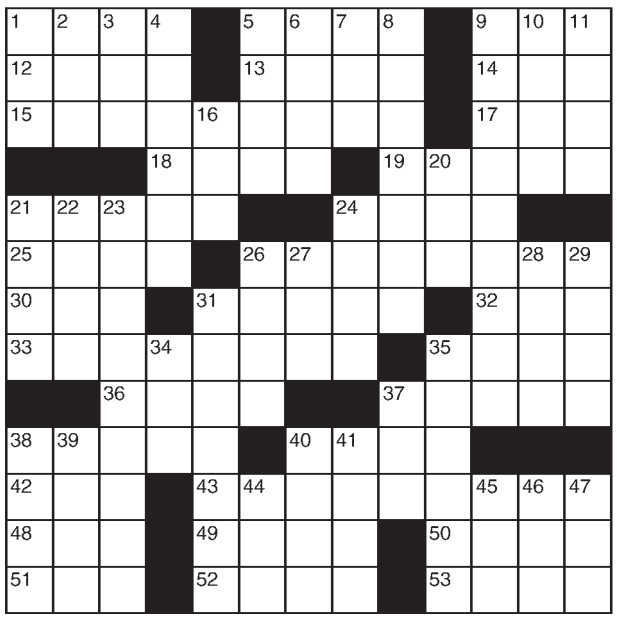
"I get to spread the word on how your day, evening or weekend will shape up with our ever-changing weather here in Alberta." **WEEKDAYS AT 6 A.M.**

Take Five



Crossword across

1 Prompted on stage
5 "— the night before Christmas"
9 Perch
12 Geometry find
13 Colonial Nathan
14 Commotion
15 Yankee pattern
17 Not a lot
18 Drag behind
19 Song of praise
21 Recorded
24 Right on the map?
25 Oklahoma city
26 Times past, to Burns
30 Raggedy doll
31 Get the answer
32 — XING (street sign)
33 Nobody else's business?
35 Swallow, e.g.
36 "Once — a time"
37 Available
38 Beat
40 "So be it"
42 Sphere
43 Part of a gun
48 Time of your life?
49 One of HOMES
50 Tardy
51 "Le Coq —"
52 Campus VIP
53 Otherwise

Crossword down

1 Upper limit
2 Swiss canton
3 Still, in verse
4 Destroyed, as in hopes
5 By way of, briefly
6 Banshee's cry
7 Matterhorn, for one
8 Amount of ooze
9 Diaper fastener
10 Concept
11 Burg
16 Young Mr. Lincoln
20 Donkey
21 Squad
22 Domini preceder
23 ATM ID
24 Green-eyed monster
26 Crazy one
27 Every crumb
28 Dweeb
29 Vortex
31 Parodied
34 Antonym (Abbr.)
35 Bracelet type
37 Coop occupant
38 Frog's cousin
39 Therefore
40 Operatic solo
41 Carriage
44 Anger
45 Crony
46 "Monty Python" opener
47 Born

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	1	6		4				7
	8					6		
3		9		8	6			
		2	7			4		
			5		4			
		3			2	9		
			3	6		2		8
		1					3	
6				2		5	9	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

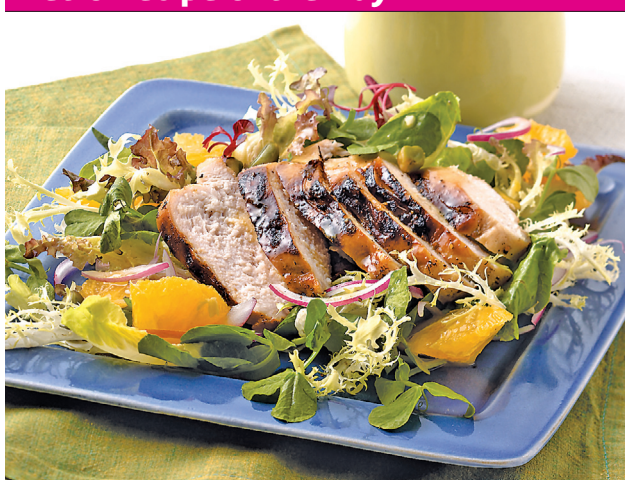
M	O	A	T	■	A	I	D	■	R	E	A	M		
I	N	V	E	I	G	L	E	■	E	T	N	A		
S	E	A	T	B	E	L	T	■	N	U	T	S		
■	■	■	H	I	S	■	O	B	O	I	S	T		
A	C	H	E	S	■	A	N	E	W	■	■	■		
P	A	I	R	■	N	E	A	T	N	I	K	■		
E	L	D	■	E	A	R	T	H	■	T	A	B		
■	M	E	A	T	P	I	E	■	D	E	L	I		
■	■	■	R	O	H	E	■	A	R	M	E	D		
E	X	T	A	N	T	■	D	N	A	■	■	■		
A	R	A	B	■	H	E	A	T	W	A	V	E		
C	A	R	L	■	A	N	T	I	L	L	E	S		
H	Y	P	E	■	S	E	A	■	S	E	T	S		

9	3	5	4	2	6	8	1	7
4	7	8	3	5	1	6	2	9
6	2	1	9	8	7	3	4	5
7	5	2	1	3	4	9	6	8
8	4	3	6	9	2	5	7	1
1	6	9	5	7	8	4	3	2
3	9	7	2	4	5	1	8	6
2	1	4	8	6	9	7	5	3
5	8	6	7	1	3	2	9	4

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Grilled Chicken Salad with Oranges

INGREDIENTS:

1/3 cup (75 mL) orange juice
2 tbsp (25 mL) lemon juice
3 tbsp (45 mL) extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbsp (15 mL) Dijon mustard
2 garlic cloves, minced
Salt to taste
Freshly ground pepper to taste
1 lb (450 grams) boneless skinless chicken breasts, trimmed
1/4 cup (50 mL) pistachios, or slivered almonds toasted
8 cups (2 L) or 5 oz (140 grams) mesclun salad mix
1/2 cup (125 mL) thinly sliced red onion
2 medium oranges, peeled, quartered, and sliced

METHOD:

1. Place orange juice, lemon juice, oil, mustard, garlic, salt and pepper in a jar with a tight-fitting lid; shake to blend. Reserve 1/3 cup (75 mL) for salad and 3 tbsp (45 mL) for basting.
2. Place remaining dressing in a shallow glass dish. Add chicken and turn to coat. Cover and marinate in refrigerator for at least 20 minutes.
3. Preheat grill to medium. Lightly oil grill rack. Remove chicken from marinade and discard marinade. Grill chicken 4 to 6 inches (10 to 15 cm) from heat source, basting cooked sides with dressing reserved for basting, until no longer pink in centre, 4 to 6 minutes per side. Transfer to cutting board and let stand 5 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, toast almonds or pistachios in small dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until light golden, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to bowl and let cool.
5. Place salad mix and onion in large bowl. Toss with dressing reserved for salad. Divide salad among 4 plates. Slice chicken and distribute. Scatter orange slices over top and sprinkle with pistachios or almonds.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Sincere gestures will make the difference in love. Time will seem to slither by. Being on the highway of love makes you dizzy.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Give something one more try. Retrace your steps to find a lost object. Do more than expected in order to be rewarded

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Don't pry into anyone's secrets. An investment strategy seems like a joke. A nervous person confesses their true intentions.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A man feels like a fool for love. Someone's fickleness is creepy. There's no consolation prize if a full effort isn't given.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
A pleased person makes an incredible offer. Don't throw in the towel when friendship hits a snag. Hold off making electronics purchases.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Don't wonder how things might have worked out. Watching a paranoid person causes problems. Facts will make you come to your senses.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Old friends are stunned by a revelation. Open all packages with care. A dental problem subsides for a while.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
Somebody will remember to get in touch. A bully will take his lumps. Don't make life changes right now.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
Your enthusiasm grows due to unexpected success. Count on a mating game moving fast. Help somebody make contact with reality.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
Hypocrisy will be exposed by an accident. Don't mistake friendliness for love. The time has come for closure with the past.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
An accounting error works in your favour. A wise woman tells the truth. A good friend brings something special.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Waiting for something to happen will irritate you. Don't pretend to be an expert if you aren't. Embarrassment will limit public activity.

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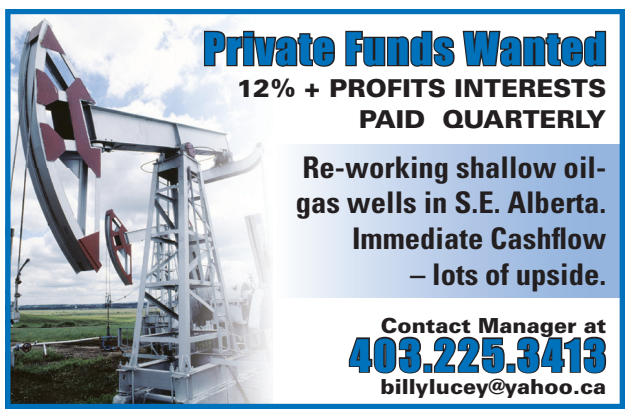

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